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AUTHOR Dynneson, Thomas L.
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ABSTRACT

This paper is a lead-in to a book entitled "Pre-Collegiate Anthropology: Trends and Materials" (SO 008 751) published in 1975 by the Anthropology Curriculum Study Project (ACSP). Topics discussed include the processes and procedures which ACSP used to gather materials for the publication, the sources of the anthropology materials, processes used for screening materials, and the screening procedures. It is noted that precollegiate anthropology curriculum materials are steadily increasing in numbers. However, because most social studies teachers were trained in departments of history, they have difficulty distinguishing sound anthropological materials from other content which only coincidentally contains anthropological issues or concerns. Therefore, an important task for both educators and anthropologists is to establish sound procedures for the evaluation, dissemination, and adoption of K-12 anthropology materials. The book was published to help with this process. (Author/RM)

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DEALING WITH A DILEMMA: DISTINGUISHING ANTHROPOLOGY MATERIALS FROM OTHER PRE-COLLEGIATE SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIALS

by

Thomas L. Dynneson

University of Texas of the Permian Basin

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Pre-collegiate anthropology courses and units (or mini courses) are steadily increasing in number. Since the 1960's all types of social studies/social science materials have been produced for both elementary and secondary schools, including materials for the teaching of anthropology. Because most social studies teachers were trained in departments of history, they have difficulty distinguishing sound anthropological materials from other content which only coincidentally contains anthropological issues or concerns. Publishers have also labeled materials as anthropological which should more accurately be classified under some other label or discipline, e.g. minority studies. Therefore, an important task for both educators and anthropologists is to establish sound procedures for the evaluation, dissemination, and adoption of pre-collegiate anthropology materials.

Recently, the Anthropology Curriculum Project under the direction of Marion J. Rice, located at the University of Georgia, published a study entitled, Pre-Collegiate Anthropology: Trends and Materials. This book was designed as a reference for those interested in information on anthropology materials. This book is the result of an extensive study by the author for materials appropriate for the teaching of anthropology at the pre-collegiate level. Because of the difficulties encountered in the

process of identifying or selecting materials for the teaching of anthropology, some basic assumptions and criteria had to be established. Once these problems were worked out, screening procedures could be developed which would help in the identification and selection processes.

Sources of Pre-collegiate Anthropology Materials

Materials for the teaching of anthropology at the pre-collegiate level are relatively scarce. However, since the 1960's, materials have become available in the form of textbooks, curriculum project materials, films, and other audio-visual media products. The most complete collection of anthropology materials is located at the Educational Resources Information Center/Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education (ERIC/ChESS) and the Social Science Education Consortium (SSEC), both located in Boulder, Colorado.

The active search for materials was conducted during the period from 1970 through 1972. However, a secondary search updated the original study in the summer of 1974. Staff personnel at the Social Science Education Consortium had already classified several sets of materials as anthropological prior to this study. The information from SSEC was contained within their Data Book. Thus the search

for materials centered in the SSEC library, the ERIC system, and a variety of miscellaneous leads including publisher's literature.

The Processes for Screening Materials for Pre-collegiate Use

The most difficult task in surveying materials for the teaching of anthropology at the pre-collegiate level was the decision to include one set of materials while excluding another set of materials. Much of the problem centers on how the material was intended for use. For instance, there are materials on non-western cultures that are intended for use in world history, there are also materials that contain anthropology information that were intended for use in geography courses or area studies, and there is material with cultural information that was designed for ethnic studies. Finally it was decided that while all types of materials were examined, only the materials which were designed specifically for developing anthropology concepts and studies would be included in the final report. Once this decision was made the criteria for accepting or rejecting materials was established. This became known as the initial and secondary screening procedures.

The Initial Screening Procedures

In the initial stages materials were processed according to the following guidelines:

(1) The materials were labeled according to their intended use (e.g. minority studies, geography, world history, etc.).

(2) Provided that the content was classified as anthropological, it was then classified and labeled according to the field or sub-field of anthropology.

(3) The developmental aspects of the material were then examined in order to determine whether or not the background content was sufficient.

The Secondary Screening Process

A secondary procedure was established in order to examine anthropology materials for conceptual soundness. This secondary stage consisted of an examination of the materials by a panel of anthropologists who could act as content experts. The panel members included: two cultural anthropologists, a physical anthropologist, an archaeologist, and a linguist. Each anthropologist worked individually and recorded his/her findings on a questionnaire which was prepared for this study.

According to procedures each anthropologist was required to:

(1) Review the material for its overall conceptual soundness.

(2) Examine selected sections of the material in order to determine the accuracy of the content.

(3) Study the material in order to determine the appropriateness of the form (or structure) through which information was conveyed to students.

The reaction of the panel to the materials was helpful in assessing the extent of enthusiasm which existed among this group of anthropologists toward the teaching of anthropology to pre-collegiate students.

The Final Report of the Study

The materials that were successfully processed through the screening procedures were listed and described in the final report of the study. The description of the materials followed the format of the Curriculum Materials Analysis System -- Long Form, a publication of the Social Science Education Consortium. The final report contained the extensive use of tables and professional terminology taken from various fields of psychology. Because the final report was so technical in nature a more readable and up-to-date version was developed as a reference for teachers, curriculum writers, anthropologists, and other interested persons. This reference is available in paperback from the Anthropology Curriculum Project located at the University of Georgia under the title Pre-Collegiate Anthropology: Trends and Materials.